

Andy Birkey, *Minnesota Independent*

The U.S. House passed the tax cut compromise proposed by President Obama on Thursday night, splitting Minnesota's congressional delegation in strange ways. Staunch conservatives and liberals voted together, albeit for different reasons. The majority of 'no' votes came from Democrats. The bill passed by a vote of 277-148 and will now be sent to Obama for a signature.

Voting for the bill were Reps. John Kline, James Oberstar, Erik Paulsen, Collin Peterson and Tim Walz. Voting against the bill were Reps. Michele Bachmann, Keith Ellison and Betty McCollum.

Bachmann opposed the bill because it contained an extension of unemployment benefits that she wanted paid for, while Ellison and McCollum objected to the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy.

Before the vote, progressive Democrats offered an amendment to reduce the estate tax exemption so that those with \$3.5 million are taxed instead of a cap at \$5 million. The amendment would have also raised the estate tax from 35 percent to 45 percent.

Ellison, McCollum and Oberstar voted to increase the estate tax while Walz and Peterson joined the Republicans. That amendment failed.